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Title: Need to provide relief to the people of Barmer and Jaisalmer districts of Rajasthan having shortage of drinking water.

COL. SONARAM CHOUDHARY (BARMER): I represent Barmer-Jaisalmer districts of Rajasthan having geographical area of 56779 kms. with population of 3273660. Being part of famous world Thar Desert, it has been facing drought year after year so much so that it witnessed famines in 40 years during the last 60 years. This year too out of 17 Tehsils, there was not even a single drop of rain in 10 Tehsils. 85% of the area falls in Dark Zone and in the remaining area, water is available at 400 to 1000 feet beneath the ground and the available water is only 2000-3000 TDS. As per the observations of W.H.O., this water is unfit for drinking purposes. In the absence of safe drinking water, the consumption of this water causes ailments among the people.

In view of the above, Indira Gandhi Canal was extended upto border area of Jaisalmer and Narmada Canal reached Barmer in the year 1995. Due to these canals, mega Water Supply Schemes were finalized and our Hon'ble Prime Minister when he was Chief Minister of Gujarat extended immense cooperation for the implementation of Narmada Canal Schemes. Schemes on both the Canals were prepared during 2003-2008, However, during 2008-2013, these schemes did not get the boost for want of release of funds. At the fag end of the regime of the previous Government in Rajasthan, 3 schemes on Narmada Canal and 2 schemes on Indira Gandhi Canal were finalized at a cost of Rs. 3000 crores. If full funds are released for these new schemes in the coming 3-4 years, 85% of the population of Barmer – Jaisalmer would get the benefit of safe drinking water which would be a commendable initiative to fulfil the dreams of our Prime Minister.

In this connection, I met Union Minister for Rural Development alongwith the concerned Minister of Rajasthan Government to urge upon him for release of funds to the tune of Rs. 3000 crore for these 5 Schemes from NRDWP or any other Centrally Funded Scheme. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan has also written a DO letter to him in this regard. Madam Speaker, through your good offices, *I* most earnestly request the Hon'ble Prime Minister & Minister for Rural Development to release the required funds as *a* Special Package or help the State to get aid from World Bank so as to provide the much needed relief to the parched people of desert districts of Rajasthan suffering from the problem of shortage of drinking water.